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"Aye," said Pat, "isn't that what it comes to? Sure it's reading the word of God we are, and don't we call it the word of God? but is it the word that God says to us, and will we take Him at His word? If He was to say it to us, would we tell Him we wouldn't take it? and did Jesus Christ say that for us, that if we seek His kingdom first, that food and clothing will be added to us?"

"And how will it be, Pat, if we just take that same as if Christ said it to ourselves?" said Jim. "Was it meant now, just for you and me? for sure if it was, what would stop me to take the promise of Jesus Christ himself for the childer and me?"

"Jem," said Pat, "does Jesus Christ tell you to seek the kingdom of God?"

"What else would I seek in heaven or earth?" said Jem; "or what else in heaven or earth would Jesus Christ bid me seek?"

"Well, then, Jem," said Pat, "isn't it for me, and for you, and for every one that has to seek the kingdom of God, that Jesus Christ said this, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you?' Didn't He mean just to clear us of them things that stops us, with His own blessed promise, that if we seek that, he'll mind the rest?"

"And will He do for us and the childer, too?" said Jem; "sure that's what goes against us."

We cannot show men in our pages: we cannot show the power of faith, and the energy in man that springs from a principle divine. But those who have felt it may imagine the earnestness of Pat, as he exclaimed—

"Will it be worse with us nor with the birds? Will He let us die in the snow no more nor them?"

We think that Pat has come near to the kingdom of God. We think he is reading God's Word as if it were in truth the Word of God, that cannot fail to them that lay hold upon it. We think his faith is becoming that victory which overcometh the world (1 John, v. 4); the faith of prophets, apostles, and martyrs; the faith of the children of God, that makes them His children, and lifts up their hearts and hopes to their Father in Heaven. And we shall look to hear what that faith leads him to do; and what it brings upon him from that Church which stands between his little children's bread and the word of God.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To diminish the chance of disappointment, all letters should be forwarded to the office by the first day of the month.

All letters to be addressed to the Editor, 9, Upper Sackville-st. Contributors of £1 per annum will be furnished with six copies, any of which will be forwarded, as directed, to nominees of the subscriber. Any one receiving any number of the journal which has not been paid for or ordered by himself, will not be charged for it, and may assume that it has been paid for by a subscriber.

The Catholic Layman.

DUBLIN, NOVEMBER 17, 1855.

MANY of our readers will, we dare say, remember the case of the monk who was convicted at the Mayo Assizes in Spring, 1852, for having, shortly before, publicly burnt a Protestant Bible in the parish of Ballyowney, near Ballinrobe, in that county; and they may possibly, also, recollect that "Brother John" was defended at the trial by an eminent counsel, Mr. Keogh—the same, we believe, who at present fills the high office of Attorney-general for Ireland.

They may possibly, also, remember that in calling their attention to the circumstance, we gave them, in our number for April, 1852, some extracts from a leading article in the *Tablet*, highly approving of the act, in the course of which the writer stated (we use his own words) that—

"If Brother John was guilty of an offence, he, the writer, was equally an offender. He has burned a Protestant Bible, and is prepared to burn a thousand more if he can gratify his taste economically; and we heartily wish that the whole seed, breed, and generation of them was extinguished. We beg leave perfectly to associate ourselves with 'Brother John' in this particular—to scoff at the book which he scoffed at, and to pronounce it a book put together by some of the most active friends and servants of the Fire King—in other words, 'the book of the devil.'"

The defence, of course, was, to use "Brother John's" language, that it was "not the Word of God, but the devil's book, that he was burning." A sentiment which another zealous Roman

Catholic advocate of the day, the Rev. Dr. Cahill, followed up not long afterwards by making the somewhat astounding assertion that "he would rather a Catholic should read the worst books of immorality than the Protestant Bible!"*

That these were not solitary instances of the deadly hostility which Roman Catholic priests in Ireland have always evinced towards the authorized version of the Scriptures may be seen by consulting the First Report of the Commissioners of Irish Education Enquiry (Appendix, p. 510), where it is recorded in the evidence that certain priests in Connaught told their flocks that "if they read the Bible, or took it into their houses, they should be damned, and that the devil was in the Bible;" meaning, we presume, the Protestant version of it.

We thought at the time these things bad enough (though it did not very greatly concern the discussions carried on in the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, as the writers in it generally quote Scripture from the Douay Bible), but had hoped that we should hear no more of such outrages, especially after the just rebuke which a witness (who objected to be sworn on the Protestant Testament) not long ago received, we believe, at Kilkenny, from the learned assistant-barrister, himself a Roman Catholic, when he stated that "he had carefully compared the two Bibles, and that he saw no reason at all why Roman Catholics should object to be sworn on the Protestant Bible, and that, in point of fact, two Roman Catholic bishops had lately taken their oaths on the very book refused by the witness, and that those bishops made no objection at all to it." We are sorry to find, however, that our anticipations have been falsified, and that all previous outrages against the Holy Scriptures have been wholly cast into the shade by a scene enacted within the last few days, almost, we may say, in the metropolis of Ireland, in which not merely one obscure monk or noisy controversialist was concerned, but in which several much-lauded Roman Catholic priests seem to have been actively engaged—an occurrence we could scarcely have credited but that the substantial truth of the account has been testified by eye-witnesses beyond all impeachment.

We take the following brief account from our respected contemporary the *Daily Express* of Friday last:—

"THE REDEMPTORIST FATHERS CELEBRATING THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER.

"Unauthenticated rumours and correspondence reached us on Tuesday, referring to an alleged case of wholesale Bible-burning by the Redemptorist Fathers at Kingstown. The accounts conveyed to us were almost too dreadful for belief, and we consequently abstained from giving them currency in our columns. We have since received indisputable evidence of the scandalous business; for we have not only conversed with a person that was an eye-witness of what took place, but we have seen with our own eyes a fragment saved from the 'burned sacrifice.' It appears that for some time past these fathers have been holding a series of services in Kingstown, the object of which was to spread dismay and terror among those who possibly might have come under the influence of clerical zeal or Scripture-readers connected with the Protestant Church. On Monday morning the effect of their ministrations was made visible. A fire was kindled in front of the Roman Catholic Chapel, at mid-day, in the open air, and in the presence of a large number of persons who looked on, some exulting like fiends, some excited by strong indignation, and others more in 'sorrow than in anger.' A whole load of Bibles and other sacred works was committed to the flames. The police, who saw it all, did not interfere. Is this, we ask, a Protestant country, and can it be that we are governed by Protestant laws? The Protestant Bible publicly burned by a fanatic and bigoted throng, and yet no interposition, no penalty, no punishment! The thing is monstrous!"

The following account is taken from the *Dublin Evening Packet* of Tuesday, Nov. 6:—

"To the Editor of the *Evening Packet*.

"SIR—I have this day witnessed an awful scene.

* See the *Tablet*, Dec. 17, 1853, p. 874, for which, however (as a violation of all common sense and decency), he was shortly after soundly castigated by the *Rambler* of February, 1854.

You are, perhaps, aware that the Redemptorist Fathers have been holding a variety of services in the Roman Catholic chapels, at Kingstown, during the last fortnight. Large crowds have attended, and there has been great excitement among the people. A few days ago they erected, in this chapel-yard, a great red cross for the adoration of the multitude; but this morning they reached the climax, by procuring a large number of copies of the authorized version of the Holy Bible, and burning them, in open day, before the public gaze, one of the metropolitan police passing up and down till they were consumed. Comment here would be out of place.

"AN EYE WITNESS."

The Editor of the *Evening Packet* adds:—

"Had we not the fullest confidence in the veracity of our correspondent, who sends us his name in attestation of the above, we could not believe it possible that this occurrence took place, as we may say, in the metropolis of Ireland."

What her Majesty's Attorney-General may think of such matters we know not; or whether the offence was committed in the hope that the defender of the Partree monk will not prosecute the Redemptorist Fathers, we know not; we leave such matters to the public authorities, whose duty it is to vindicate the laws: we are much more concerned in the question, what view the heads of the Roman Catholic Church will take of the affair; but we collect, from the tone of approbation with which Dr. Dixon, in his new book on the thigh-bone of the blessed Cornelius (which our readers will find some notice of in another column), speaks of the seizure of Protestant Bibles at Nice, that the ecclesiastical authorities in Ireland are not likely to disapprove very highly of destroying any more than of seizing them. The passage we allude to is an extract from a newspaper published at Nice, in Piedmont, called *La Verité*, which alludes to a fact of very recent date, as follows:—

"We have spoken, in our last number, of a seizure of Protestant Bibles and heretical works effected at Nice, at the house of MM. Gay and Leon Pelatte, Protestant ministers, as also in an English family, Wilson, and at Menton, in the house of M. Trencas, Adjutant-Major of the National Guard. We are assured that in the house of one only of these gentlemen twenty-eight chests of these books were found; but that which, beyond all question, is the most striking feature of this affair is the protest addressed to the English Consul at Nice, by M. Wilson, and inserted in the journal *L'Avenir*. It confirms victoriously the efforts which England has made to Protestantize Piedmont, and the aid and assistance in this attempt which she is known to have given the ministry that directs the cabinet of Turin. Here is the protest—

"I protest, in the name of the Earl of Shaftesbury, the noble President of the British and Foreign Bible Society, who, when he was at Nice, confided to my care the Bibles and New Testaments belonging to the society. He made me then promise to apprise him as soon as possible of every effort that would be made to seize these books, or to put an obstacle to their legitimate use, in order that he might, without delay, refer the matter to the government of Turin, through the medium of his friend, the Count de Cavour."

"W. CARUS WILSON."

"*La Verité* concludes by calling on the independent and Catholic press to give all the publicity in their power to these facts, which throw so much light on the misfortunes of Piedmont."—(See Dr. Dixon's book, p. 62.)

If Dr. Dixon considers the misfortunes of Piedmont to be (as we may infer he does from quoting this article) referable to the circulation of the Protestant Bible, one would naturally suppose that the remedy he proposes to avoid similar misfortunes in Ireland would be the establishment of what we have more than once ourselves suggested—a ROMAN CATHOLIC BIBLE SOCIETY, for the circulation of the Douay Bible and Rhemish Testament. The most cursory perusal of his book, however, will easily satisfy any one that his remedy for the misfortunes of Ireland is one of a very different character. He has, in fact, made the important discovery that it is bones, not Bibles, which Ireland wants for her welfare and protection at the present period. The principal object which Dr. Dixon seems to have in view is, to promote the worship or veneration of *relics* in general in this country by importing "a thigh bone and one of the ribs"

of a supposed predecessor, who lived 700 years ago, and introducing "his office and mass into the ancient city of Armagh, according to the rite of the *greater double* which they hold at Chambery, in Savoy." In p. 56 he thus describes his grief at the want of such relics in Ireland:—

"We arrived at the Cathedral of Fiesole (a small city near Florence) just as the people were coming out after last mass. The clergy, who were in the church, paid us every attention, and immediately gave orders to have the shrine of St. Donatus, which is kept on a side altar, opened, that we might see the relics of our sainted countryman, and venerate them. The interior of the shrine is beautifully ornamented, and the bones of the holy bishop are all there. On looking at that precious treasure, we could not help reflecting, with grief, on the absence from our own dear Ireland of the relics of her saints. They went to enlighten the continent by their preaching and to edify it by their holy lives, and they have left their bones to it as a precious inheritance, which has been most jealously guarded by the depositaries of that sacred treasure."

Dr. Dixon's taste for such treasures seems to have been largely gratified during his journey. He thus describes some of his visits:—

"Commencing our journey for Sienna, we left the city (Rome) by the Porta del Popolo. It gave me great pleasure to think that I was to visit Sienna, the city of St. Catherine (whose head, it appears from another passage, p. 53, is kept at one of the altars of the church of the Dominicans in that place), and remained there for a night. I had, whilst in Rome, been delighted to see the improvements that are going on in the great Dominican Church of the Minerva, where the body of St. Catherine rests, in a marble sarcophagus, under one of the side altars. As soon as the improvements shall be finished, the body will be removed to the high altar. I had the gratification of contributing my mite towards the fitting up of this new shrine of that holy virgin. We had travelled for a great part of the day before I was aware of another happiness which I was to enjoy, even before reaching Sienna, and that was to visit Viterbo, the city of St. Rose. It was in Viterbo that we rested for dinner. Immediately after dinner, before the diligence resumed its journey, Mr. Farrelly and I were so fortunate as to find time to visit the body of St. Rose.†

"We were received with great kindness by the good nuns of the convent in which the body is kept. The saint rests on a couch placed in a gorgeous shrine. We were admitted to kiss her hand. That body, the great treasure of the convent and of Viterbo, so miraculously preserved for near six hundred years, is whole and entire. Glory be for ever to the great God!

"I was reminded by this visit of the body of another saint, which I had the happiness of visiting, and of which I was permitted to kiss the hand, in 1846, in Bologna, who died in that city on the 9th March, 1463, being then forty-nine years of age. This body is not only whole and entire, but has retained its natural flexibility like a living body; and, dressed in the nun's habit, it sits, with an air of great dignity, in an arm-chair, in a graceful and natural position, without being fastened in any way."

The secret of these apparent miracles is, however, somewhat naively let out in other passages, when explaining how the remains of the blessed Cornelius, or rather St. Concord, have assumed their present imposing appearance:—

"His relics, which had reposed for a long time in a poor walnut shrine, covered with still poorer ornaments, were, on the occasion of repairing the church, replaced by a happy idea, as a precious treasure, in a more suitable state. The wretched panel which formed the front of the shrine was replaced with a handsome plate glass, and, thanks to the zeal of several pious persons, the holy bishop is richly adorned—p. 68. This year (1854) the entire head of this holy body has been sent to Rome to have the face filled up with wax."—p. 70.

The work of the Count de Firnex, which Dr. Dixon reprints for our edification, goes into something more of detail in this matter:—

"These preliminaries (i.e., the examination of the brain of the blessed Concord by the ecclesiastical authorities at Rome) terminated, the relics were enclosed in a waxen bust, representing the saint with that natural and true ex-

pression they know so well how to give in the city of the saints. The head is a fine one, and the beholder is pleased to see imprinted on the stranger's brow the noble dignity, the serious and meditative air of the inhabitant of the North of Europe, joined to a sweetness and serenity of expression which at once recalls the distant birth-place of St. Cornelius, his exemplary life, and early death."—p. 79.

Who can say whether, without informing Dr. Dixon, the remains of St. Catherine of Bologna and St. Rose of Viterbo, "whose graceful and natural postures" in the couch and the arm-chair he, in his simplicity, referred to *miraculous agency*, were not really indebted for their attractions to the same *miraculous power* by which ecclesiastical artists in the city of saints "knew so well" how to impart to a waxen bust, in the year 1854, the natural and true expression of the fine head of St. Cornelius, who died 700 years before! We suppose, when the visit of St. Concord's head to Rome is forgotten, pilgrims in ages to come will (not knowing that *all the bones* of the good bishop are not still there) give glory to God for the miraculous preservation of his body, "*whole and entire*," and kiss his hand of wax, believing devoutly that it has been miraculously preserved from decay for seven or eight centuries!

One observation more we must make about these holy relics before we have done. It appears that it has been "a great source of joy and special exultation to the good people of Chambery to have succeeded in preserving those relics of the holy archbishop from indignity during the period of the French Revolution; and they have found by long experience that many favours have been placed by God at the disposal of the blessed Cornelius; one of which is, the *procuring of rain for their parched crops*, from whence arises such a *special devotion* to the blessed archbishop among the farmers of the whole country around" (p. 102), which Count de Firnex (p. 81) thus describes a little amusingly:—

"Since his decease he has often proved to our city that he has adopted* it for his country, by obtaining signal favours for it, through his powerful influence. A great number of cures have been operated at various epochs by his intercession, and the inhabitants remember with gratitude the beneficial rains which, after a long drought,† suddenly refreshed our harvests, because St. Cornelius was publicly invoked, or when some extensive demonstration of homage had been paid him. At one time, this celestial benefactor was so earnestly and unceasingly invoked, that he seemed to forget the honour due to his mortal remains (!) and during a procession in which his holy relics were borne, the clouds gathered quickly, and then poured their refreshing showers upon the parched earth so bountifully that, to save the Saint's body (we suppose to prevent the dry bones from being washed away), the bearers were obliged to enter a house in the suburb Reclus."

"Thus, this sacred treasure is considered as the most powerful resource of the country in unusually dry seasons; and, not only immense crowds of the people of this city, sometimes headed by their magistrates, but even the population of the surrounding parishes crowded to Lemenc, to invoke this powerful protector."

We cannot help wondering at the hardness of heart which could rob the poor farmers of Lemenc of half their "most powerful resource in dry seasons," and bring it over to Ireland, where our climate is generally deemed rather too moist already, and where, therefore, "the favours at the Saint's disposal" will be rather prejudicial than otherwise; and we cannot help sympathising with the just horror of the magistrates and population when, upon finding, at some future time, that they only procure *half rain enough* to refresh their parched harvests, that the real cause is that their patron saint can only now stand on one leg, the most Rev. Dr. Dixon having privately, but rather treacherously, carried off the other. "All this," Dr. Dixon admits, in page 74, "was done *privately*, that the people of the parish might not be generally aware of what had happened; for great as was their respect for

the successor of the blessed Concord, they would hardly have endured to see so much of the bones of their revered patron and protector carried away from them." And who could say they would have been wrong, if the success of their harvests depended on their possession?

Dr. Dixon, it is evident from his whole book, is one of those pious believers who look not very pryingly into the truth or falsehood of statements, or the propriety or impropriety of conduct, as long as the cause of Rome is likely to be promoted by either the one or the other. He tells us that he saw the *miraculous crucifix* that bowed the head to St. Francis of Sales, in the presence of the people to whom he was preaching! (p. 63); and that he visited, in Paris, the chapel in which the Sister of Charity was favoured with the vision of the *miraculous medal*! (p. 65). He narrates the story of the painting of the Saviour, in the church of St. Maria, in Monticelli, at Rome, which was observed to *open and move its eyes*, for several months, in the year 1854! (p. 40); and he rejoices to state that Monseigneur Ginoulhac, the present bishop of Grenoble, has not the most remote doubt of the truth of the *apparition of La Salette*! (p. 46.) Nothing is too hard, in fact, for Dr. Dixon to swallow, except the Protestant Bible—which he looks upon as "the cause of all the misfortunes of Piedmont," and we presume heartily thanks the Redemptorist Fathers for burning them *en masse* at Kingstown, on the 5th November, as a substitute for the somewhat obsolete effigies of Guy Fawkes.

The struggle has fairly begun, and though, perhaps, it may be a century hence before Ireland will have finally settled the difficult question in modern theology, whether it is safer for her to *put her trust in bones or Bibles*, we entertain not the slightest doubt as to the ultimate result, in spite of the Redemptorist Fathers, or even the thigh-bone of the blessed Cornelius, *alias* Conchovar, *alias* St. Concord, *alias* Conor Mac-Concoille, *alias* Mac-Concalede, *alias* Mac-Conchailleadh, whether he were a Bishop of Iceland or an Archbishop of Armagh, a canonized saint, a schismatic, or a traitor.

REASONS FOR NOT READING THE BIBLE.

TO THE ROMAN CATHOLICS OF IRELAND.

BELOVED COUNTRYMEN—Various attempts have been made to prove that it is "the right and the duty of all men to read the Holy Scriptures."

The arguments advanced in support of this opinion have usually been drawn from three sources: from reason, from the Scriptures themselves, and from the writings of the fathers.

It has, for instance, been argued, that God in giving to mankind a revelation of his will, must have intended it for all men alike, all men alike requiring it, and must have designed that it should be as free to every man as the light which shines around us and the air which we breathe.

It has further been insisted, that the Bible itself declares this to be the design of its Author; and great stress has been laid upon those words of our blessed Redeemer, addressed to the common people, "SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES:" which they allege contain not merely a command to all to read the Scriptures, but even a solemn injunction to study them with diligence, exploring their hidden meaning, as men digging in a mine for gold or precious stones.

To the objection drawn from the obscurity of the Scriptures, and the difficulty, especially to poor and unlearned persons, of understanding them, it has been replied, that most parts of the Scripture are plain and easy to be understood, though some are obscure and difficult; that there are "shallow places," as a great Bishop of Rome once said, "in which a lamb may walk, as well as deep places in which an elephant may swim." That enough is intelligible even to a child to "instruct him to salvation," as Scripture itself testifies. That the Gospel was preached to the poor, and, therefore, may be read by them; and that it is not *human learning* which is required to enable any man to understand the Scriptures, but *divine teaching*, an express promise of which is given to all who by prayer seek it.

Then, with regard to the danger of exercising the right, as it is called, of private judgment, seeing that men may put a wrong meaning upon what they read, and thus "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction,"

* The *facies* above are our own.

† Dr. Dixon here anticipates, not unnaturally, "But some one may ask, who was St. Rose of Viterbo?" The answer he gives is, no doubt, remarkable. "She was born in that city, in the year 1241, of poor parents; and God inspired her with such wisdom, that she—a poor uneducated child—was authorized by the Holy See to preach publicly and explain the Scriptures to the people, in the streets of Viterbo, at the early age of ten years! and such was the fervour of her preaching, and so great the miracles which accompanied it, that she was able effectually to counteract the evil influence of the Emperor, Frederick II., in the city of Viterbo, and to overturn there the heresy and schism which followed in the train of that impious opponent of the Holy See."

* If so, pray, what right had Dr. Dixon to interfere with him?

† As far as our experience goes, rain generally does follow a long drought! At least, in Ireland, such miracles are not uncommon!